

MYRNA ENRIQUEZ,	)	Case No. 2:17-cv-01010-APG-NJK
Plaintiff(s),	)	
	)	ORDER
v.	)	
	)	(Docket No. 21)
WAL-MART STORES, INC.,	)	
	)	
Defendant(s).	)	

<sup>1</sup> The fact that a request to extend is presented as a stipulation rather than as a motion does not obviate the need to meet the applicable standard. *See, e.g.*, Fed. R. Civ. P. 29(b) (stipulations impacting the discovery cutoff require Court approval).

1     **I.     WAL-MART’S BLACKOUT PERIOD**

2             The first reason provided in the stipulation is that Wal-Mart prefers not to have its employees  
3     deposed during the holiday season, has a self-imposed deposition “blackout period” lasting roughly two  
4     months, and does not want to move forward with the noticed Rule 30(b)(6) deposition during this period.  
5     *See* Docket No. 21 at 3; *see also* Docket No. 20 at 1. The Court has already explained that such a  
6     preference, standing alone, is not sufficient to delay discovery. *See* Docket No. 20 at 1 (citing, *inter alia*,  
7     *Morgan v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.*, Case No. 2:17-cv-02269-RFB-NJK, Docket No. 11 at 1 n.1 (D. Nev.  
8     Sept. 7, 2017)). Instead, to determine whether to extend discovery in this case again so that Wal-Mart  
9     can avoid depositions during its blackout period, the Court ordered the parties to submit a variety of  
10    information, including: (1) the Rule 30(b)(6) deponent’s position at Wal-Mart; (2) whether other officers  
11    or employees can “cover” for the deponent during a short absence; (3) whether the deposition can occur  
12    outside normal business hours; and (4) whether Wal-Mart informed opposing counsel earlier in this case  
13    of its preference to avoid depositions during this period so that such depositions could have been  
14    conducted earlier. Docket No. 20 at 2.

15            The pending stipulation fails to provide sufficient information to show good cause for the  
16    requested extension. The stipulation does not identify the position of Wal-Mart’s Rule 30(b)(6)  
17    deponent and does not explain whether his or her duties can be covered by others during deposition  
18    preparation and the deposition itself. Without such basic information, the Court cannot even discern  
19    whether there is a real need to avoid a deposition during this period. Similarly, the stipulation does not  
20    explain why the deposition cannot occur outside normal business hours so that Wal-Mart’s business  
21    interests can be accommodated without delaying discovery. Instead, the deposition merely states that  
22    this is a possibility that Wal-Mart’s counsel is investigating. *See* Docket No. 21 at 3. Lastly, and  
23    significantly, it appears that Wal-Mart did not inform opposing counsel of its blackout period until after  
24    the deposition was noticed. *See* Docket No. 21 at 3.<sup>2</sup> To the extent Wal-Mart wanted to avoid

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26            <sup>2</sup> The stipulation does not actually state when opposing counsel was notified of Wal-Mart’s blackout  
27    period, and instead states that Wal-Mart was not provided the notice of deposition until after the blackout  
28    period had already begun. *See* Docket No. 21 at 3. Given that the Court specifically ordered that any  
renewed stipulation must identify whether Wal-Mart’s scheduling preference was conveyed to opposing

1 depositions during a two-month long period, it should have notified opposing counsel of that fact as  
2 soon as it was clear that the blackout period coincided with any portion of the discovery period in this  
3 case. The stipulation fails to explain why that was not conveyed when counsel stipulated nearly four  
4 months ago to extend the discovery cutoff to December 4, 2017. *See* Docket No. 15.<sup>3</sup> Presumably the  
5 current scheduling issue could have been avoided had Wal-Mart alerted opposing counsel months ago  
6 of its scheduling preferences.

7 In short, the stipulation fails to show that Wal-Mart's preference to avoid depositions for a two-  
8 month period during the holiday season is good cause for the extension sought in this case.

## 9 **II. SETTLEMENT DISCUSSIONS**

10 The stipulation also indicates that a 60-day extension is appropriate because the parties are  
11 currently engaged in informal settlement discussions and may engage in private mediation if the case  
12 does not settle before the close of discovery. Docket No. 21 at 3. This reason does not suffice for an  
13 additional extension of discovery. First, whether the parties may engage in mediation after the close of  
14 discovery is not pertinent to whether discovery should be extended. Second, while the parties indicate  
15 that additional discovery is germane to settlement discussions, the stipulation fails to explain why that  
16 is good cause for an extension to the discovery deadlines. That the parties wish to complete additional  
17 discovery to facilitate settlement has no bearing on whether the discovery deadlines should be extended.  
18 At any rate, the parties have had months to engage in discovery and settlement discussions, and the  
19 stipulation fails to provide a sufficient basis that discovery should be extended by 60 days at this late  
20 juncture based on the existence of settlement discussions.

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26 counsel earlier in the case, Docket No. 20 at 2, the Court assumes from the omission of such information  
27 that it was not.

28 <sup>3</sup> It is also unclear why the Court was not informed in the previous stipulation extending the  
discovery cutoff to December 4, 2017, that Wal-Mart intended a portion of that discovery period to not apply  
to depositions. *See* Docket No. 15.

### III. CONCLUSION

For the reasons discussed above, the stipulation to extend deadlines by 60-days is not supported by good cause and is therefore **DENIED**. As a one-time courtesy to the parties, the Court will provide a 14-day extension and **SETS** deadlines as follows:

- Rebuttal expert disclosures: December 1, 2017;
- Discovery cutoff: December 18, 2017;
- Dispositive motions: January 17, 2018; and
- Joint proposed pretrial order: February 16, 2018, or 30 days after decision on dispositive motions.

The parties are advised to use the remaining time in the discovery period wisely, as the Court is  
not inclined to grant any further extensions.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATED: November 20, 2017

NANCY J. KOPPE  
United States Magistrate Judge